

AP[®] World History

Syllabus 4

Course Overview

The AP[®] World History course provides a lens through which to understand history and a foundation from which to view the complexities of today’s global arena. Its emphasis on encounters and interactions provides a framework that is especially important. The general contours of our AP World History course, in terms of content covered and skills developed, are shaped by the dynamics of continuity and change across all five themes as well as the “habits of mind” outlined in the AP Course Description. These overarching themes and the habits of mind foster critical thinking and encourage students to develop their own abilities and to truly be part of the learning process. [C2]

C2—The five overarching themes articulated in the Course Description receive approximately equal attention throughout the course. The course requires students to engage with the dynamics of continuity and change across the historical periods that are included in the course.

The course, which adopts the periodization approach to analyzing global events and interactions from the foundations of history to the present, is designed to challenge students to become “owners” and creators of independent ideas by maintaining a student-centered classroom environment. One goal for the course is to provide an engaging and rigorous curriculum that motivates students. The long-term objective is for students to demonstrate an understanding of how the big picture of world history assists in understanding the complexities of today’s global arena. [C1] Additionally, it is expected that students who wish to take the AP Exam will be prepared for that challenge.

C1—Periodization guidelines are used to select relevant course content from 8000 BCE to the present.

Texts

Andrea, Alfred J., and James H. Overfield. *The Human Record: Sources of Global History Volume 2: Since 1500*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998. Primary-source reader.

Reilly, Kevin, ed. *Worlds of History: A Comparative Reader, Volume 1: To 1500*. 2nd ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004. Primary-source reader.

Stearns, Peter N., et al. *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*. 4th ed. AP version. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005. Textbook.

Pomeranz, Kenneth. *The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy 1400 to the Present*. 2nd ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006.

Course Planner

There are 18 weeks in each semester; I plan 16 weeks of lessons. The other two weeks are lost to testing and school activities. On average, we cover a chapter every two days. I spend the first two weeks of the course covering the time period between 8000 BCE and 600 CE, then four weeks for 600–1450, three weeks for 1450–1750, three weeks for 1750–1914, and four weeks for 1914–present. Change and continuity are addressed throughout the course across each unit. Each unit draws from the five overarching themes: (1) interactions between humans and the environment; (2) development and interaction of cultures; (3) state-building, expansion, and conflict; (4) creation, expansion, and interactions of economic systems; and (5) development and transformation of social structures. Each theme receives approximately equal attention. [C2] Global coverage is balanced throughout the course. [C3]

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Week 1

Unit 1 (8000 BCE–600 CE). What Is a Civilization?

Stearns, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

- “What is world history?” activities (from Johnston, *The New World History*)
- Video: Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (first episode)
- Teach the process for comparison essays by using chapters on classical civilizations and a jigsaw activity [C6]
- Write first comparison essay [C6]

C3—The course provides balanced global coverage, with Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe all represented. No more than 30 percent of course time is devoted to European history.

Week 2

Unit 1 (8000 BCE–600 CE). Focus on Point of View and World Religions

Stearns, Chapter 5

- Find current events articles on the same topic from different perspectives, and use to introduce the concept of point of view
- World religions overview: Using Internet sources, students investigate the major religions as homework
- In-class activities on comparing and contrasting major world religions
- Cultural diffusion exercise: Analyzing images of the Buddha from different locations
- Mental mapping on the origins, spread, and influence of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism, using Stearns, *Cultures in Motion* (on mental mapping, see Johnston, *The New World History*) [C5]

C6—The course provides students with frequent practice in writing analytical and interpretive essays such as document-based questions (DBQ) and thematic essays addressing issues of change, continuity, and comparison (see the *AP World History Course Description* for more information).

C5—The course includes extensive instruction in analysis and interpretation of a wide variety of primary sources, such as documentary material, maps, statistical tables, works of art, and pictorial and graphic materials.

UNIT EXAM

Week 3

Unit 2 (600–1450). Birth and Spread of Islam

Stearns, Chapters 6, 7, 8

- Point-of-view practice using articles on wearing hijab (Council on Islamic Education)
- DBQ practice activity on women in Islam
- Inner–outer discussion on non-Muslims living in Muslim Empire and the spread of Islam to Africa (use primary sources from Andrea and Overfield’s *The Human Record*) [C5]
- Reading on the city of Baghdad from the Council on Islamic Education and comparison with the city of Pittsburgh
- Crusades—using *The Crusades from Medieval European and Muslim Perspectives*

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Week 4

Unit 2 (600–1450). Chinese Renaissance [C3]

Stearns, Chapter 12 (pp. 262–71) and Chapter 13

- Each day this week, students spend 15 to 20 minutes doing one aspect of the DBQ with a partner, using the DBQ practice activity sheet. By the end of the week, all components have been covered and modeled in class; students then write a response to that DBQ over the weekend. Each year, I change the DBQ topic. I try to use topics that we do not get to discuss much in class. This year it was on pilgrimages. [C6]
- Song dynasty activity using Asia for Educators website (afe.easia.columbia.edu)

C3—The course provides balanced global coverage, with Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe all represented. No more than 30 percent of course time is devoted to European history.

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Week 5

Unit 2 (600–1450). Changes in Europe

Stearns, Chapters 10, 14

- Compare Middle Ages European society to that of Japan [C3]
- Inner–outer circle discussion on Mongols and interaction (Reilly, *Worlds of History*)
- Mapping activities on interaction

Week 6

Unit 2 (600–1450). Unit Review

Stearns, Chapter 15

- Review activities, comparison of major learning centers, theme charts, and time lines. Because of the incredible pace of the course, the students need this time to put together the interactions between areas and to play with ideas.
- Comparing women using primary sources from *Economic Roles of Women in World History* [C5]

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UNIT EXAM

Week 7

Unit 3 (1450–1750). Why the West? Europe and the “New World” [C3]

Stearns, Chapters 16, 17, 22

- World trade mental mapping
- “Who’s the Driver—Silver Trade?” from *AP World History Best Practices*
- Jigsaw on Protestant Reformation
- *The Day the Universe Changed* video, with James Burke
- Absolutism: Compare Louis XIV, Peter the Great, and Oliver Cromwell

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Week 8

Unit 3 (1450–1750). Opening the Atlantic and Slave Trade [C3]

Stearns, Chapters 19, 20

- Primary-source activity on South American societies prior to European encounter [C5]
- Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel* video, part 2
- Debate: Advantages/disadvantages to colonies
- Reading/Discussion: *The World That Trade Created*, Chapter 5 [C4]

C4—The course teaches students to analyze evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship.

Week 9

Unit 3 (1450–1750). Muslim and Asian Empires [C3]

Stearns, Chapters 18, 21

- Jigsaw on empires: Russia, Mughals, Safavids, Ottomans, Tokugawa, Ming, Oya
- Comparing women using primary sources from *Economic Roles of Women in World History* [C5]

- Jigsaw on free and unfree labor systems using primary sources from *Free and Unfree Agrarian Workers, Peasants and Slaves, 1550–1750*

MIDTERM EXAM / END OF FIRST QUARTER

Week 10

Unit 4 (1750–1914). Revolution and Industrialization

Stearns, Chapters 23, 24

- Enlightenment salon: Inner–outer circle discussion
- Comparing revolutions jigsaw (mini-research activity)
- Latin American revolutions

Week 11

Unit 4 (1750–1914). Imperialism

Stearns, Chapter 25

- Mental mapping of global technological and transportation changes
- Debate on Malthus’s theories
- Comparing women in the industrial age using primary sources from *Economic Roles of Women in World History* [C5]
- Reading/Discussion: *The World That Trade Created*, Chapter 6 [C4]

Week 12

Unit 4 (1750–1914). Encounters: West and East [C3]

Stearns, Chapters 26, 27

- A one-act play: *Qianlong Meets Macartney: Collision of Two World Views*
- Compare Tokugawa to Meiji using readings from *Tokugawa Japan*
- Debate: Who had the most successful response to the West? [C4]

UNIT EXAM

Week 13

Unit 5 (1914–the present). World War I and Its Aftermath

Stearns, Chapters 28, 29

- Compare symbols and types of nationalism: Japan, India, Germany, and England [C3]
- World War I simulation
- Arts activity: Surrealism, dada, cubism, social realism (see student activities)

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Week 14

Unit 5 (1914–the present). The Great Depression and World War II

Stearns, Chapters 30, 31

- “150 Percent Nazi” by Peter Becker
- Between the Wars News Show: Using sections of the text and handouts, students create news shows/skits covering the pertinent information and movements (Stearns, Chapters 29, 30)
- Rewriting history assignment: Students respond to the question: Given your analysis of the 1920s and 1930s, was there another route the Western powers could have followed to avoid World War II? [C4]

C4—The course teaches students to analyze evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship.

Week 15

Unit 5 (1914–the present). The Cold War

Stearns, Chapters 32, 33, 34

- Inner–outer circle discussion: Comparing the USSR and China
- Jigsaw on genocides from *Confronting Genocide: Never Again?*
- Africa in the Cold War

Week 16

Unit 5 (1914–the present). The Non-Western World and Globalization

Stearns, Chapters 34, 36

- Group debates on student-selected global topics
- Group debates on the impact of globalization in Africa, Latin America, or Southeast Asia (students select specific topic of interest)

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UNIT EXAM AND COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM

Teaching Strategies

The AP themes and habits of mind influence the design of instructional strategies and content selection throughout the course. In addition, class discussion and activities incorporate and reinforce the themes as well as engage the dynamics of continuity and change across each of the periods studied. [C5]

Before the course starts, all students complete a summer assignment that is designed to acquaint them with some of the course expectations. They are assigned (1) an atlas activity to familiarize them with world regions and identification of countries, (2) a summary of the Foundations period (reading the chapter outlines on the Stearns website), and (3) one book activity. [C5] The choices for this year were Jack Weatherford’s *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro’s *Son of the Revolution*, Adam Hochschild’s *King*

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Leopold's Ghost, Katsu Kokichi's *Musui's Story*, or Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*. During the unit that the summer book relates to, students create a presentation on the essential elements of the book that they selected. Because the students read 10 to 15 pages of the textbook per night, on average, there are no additional novels or supplemental books assigned during the semester.

Once the course begins, motivating students to become responsible for their own reading is the first priority, along with intense focus on the basic skills needed to be successful in AP World History during the first four weeks of the course. Daily activities that rely heavily on student participation are utilized in order to encourage them to be responsible for students' reading at home. I use debate class openers, an art slide, a quick role-playing scenario, or a one-question reading quiz to check for general understanding of the previous night's reading. [C5] These activities also promote higher-level thinking about their reading by asking debate-style questions or application questions. To develop their reading comprehension of the text, I incorporate mini lessons (10 minutes) on note-taking strategies such as mental mapping (see below). I model the activity in class, and then students use the strategy at least twice each unit in their Bonus Notebook. The Bonus Notebook earns them bonus points for each unit. My goal is to encourage them to try new reading and note-taking strategies and to see how these strategies may help them. Many students find AP World History to be their first challenging course, as they did not necessarily need sound study habits and skills in order to be successful in previous classes.

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Early on, I focus on the habits of mind by introducing the skills related to the DBQ and the comparison essay. Since the Foundations period is covered quickly, I choose documents that relate to that period to teach the skills. By week four, students write a response to their first DBQ and then write two or three more at home and one in class during the semester. [C6] My goal, after week four, is that students are accustomed to the pace and expectations of the course and are able to utilize the basic skills of point of view, comparison, and higher-level thinking to answer questions. To develop the ability to see trends over time, students maintain a change-over-time theme chart for each unit. Plus, we consistently peer-review essays and score models of all three types of essays, using the AP scoring guidelines. [C2]

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In terms of the daily class structure, I strive to split the 80-minute period into three parts: an opener (debate or class activity), lecture, and student activity or 10-minute video clip. Lectures typically expand on material in their text and last for 20 to 30 minutes. I resist the temptation to rehash the textbook.

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The 80 minutes also provides time for simulations, role-playing, and inner-outer discussions. Inner-outer discussions, or "fishbowls," are a great technique to develop critical thinking skills. Usually, I divide the class in two and give a different set of readings on the same topic to each side. On the day of the discussion, one half of the class discusses the topics while the other half takes notes, then the sides switch. You can also do this by having everyone read the same text and then identifying half the class to be the first set of "fish" (have them sit in the center of the classroom) while the other half of the class sits on the outside of the "fishbowl" and asks questions. Evaluation is conducted during the activity and is based on student participation, use of textual evidence in discussion, and so forth. Make a score sheet based on your expectations.

Given the quick pace of the 18 weeks, I tend not to assign student presentations or research projects. Instead, I use debates and one group presentation related to students' summer reading. I use a lot of pair-share techniques when working with new skills and jigsaw activities to cover a specific theme in an effective manner. To build their skills, I try to incorporate visual and physical applications of ideas to appeal to a variety of learning styles. For example, I place students in groups, and ask them to build a physical monument reflecting a European legacy in the New World. To connect experientially with events and concepts, my students re-create works of art by becoming the artwork. I then ask them various questions reflecting on the critical issues.

Another visual strategy is mental mapping, a technique in which students quickly sketch part of the world to show the spread of ideas, trade, religion, or cultural diffusion. Mental mapping can be used as a note-taking strategy and as an assessment tool. My primary purpose for using this strategy is to develop students' ability to visualize the globe—to “see” relationships between geographic areas and where historical processes occur. For example, I might ask students to discuss the trade patterns of 1000–1450 on a mental map. They would draw an outline of the world and then use arrows to show the movement of goods and discuss reactions or influences of trade. Students then write a description of the process in the margins of the mental map. My students do at least four mental maps with topics of their choice in their notebooks for each unit. I also assign three required global mental maps for each unit: trade, migrations, and ideas/technology. I adapted this technique from Deborah Smith Johnston (for more information, see Appendix A in *AP World History Unit A1: The New World History*, available at <http://store.collegeboard.com/productdetail.do?Itemkey=040761101>).¹

In terms of technology in the classroom, I assign a few Webquest activities, which provide strong visuals along with information for students—for example, the Song dynasty materials at <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song>. In the spring semester, I assign a group debate activity on student-selected global issue topics that occurs after the AP Exam.

Preparing for the AP Exam occurs outside of class time. Starting in late March, I plan after-school sessions that meet twice a week for six weeks. In addition, I offer two eight-hour Saturday sessions. I try to handle review through the use of mini lectures and essay-style discussion questions, as well as making change-over-time charts and comparison grids for each unit. During one of the eight-hour Saturday sessions, I invite only the second-semester students so that we can focus on 1920 to the present. By the time the exam occurs, we are usually at World War I. During two of the sessions, students take the 2002 AP Released Exam and write a response to a DBQ. I encourage the students to purchase a review book.

¹ Deborah Smith Johnston. *AP World History Unit A1: The New World History*. New York: The College Board, 2003.

Student Evaluation

Students are evaluated in a number of ways on various skills, and each activity is worth a certain number of points. Types of individual evaluations include essay writing, responses to document-based questions, inner–outer discussions, class participation, debates, and quizzes/tests. There is a major test at the end of each unit. In addition, I employ timed writing exercises throughout each unit. [C6] Each Friday I give a map quiz on one region of the world. The students are given an atlas to study the regions over the summer. [C5] Group evaluations include mini debates and reading-check review games. All unit exams are a combination of essays, multiple-choice questions, and mental mapping exercises. For the most part, essays have the highest point value of 100; debates and other assessments vary from 50 to 100 points. Weekly quizzes are worth 10–20 points. To encourage students to use new reading and note-taking strategies that have been taught in class, they may earn bonus points by maintaining a notebook based on their text and additional readings in which they successfully demonstrate the use of these note-taking methods.

None of the above categories are weighted in determining quarter grades. Final grades are calculated by weighting the two nine-week quarters' percentages at 80 percent and the midterm and final exams at 20 percent. The midterm consists of a multiple-choice test and a mental mapping activity, and the final exam is an essay, multiple-choice test, and mental mapping activity.

Our grading scale is 100–93 percent = A, 92–85 percent = B, 84–74 percent = C, and 73–70 percent = D.

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